



HAWAII STATE
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH



It's Cold and Flu Season! Facts About **ANTIBIOTICS**

Antibiotics are the most powerful medications we have to fight infections. Use them wisely and only when you need them.

TIPS FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Use antibiotics only to fight infections caused by bacteria. Examples of bacterial infections include strep throat, pneumonia, urinary tract infections and skin infections.

Do not ask your doctor for antibiotics to treat colds or the flu. These infections are caused by a virus and antibiotics do not kill viruses.

When your doctor prescribes you or your child an antibiotic, be sure to read and follow the directions on the prescription label each time you take or give the antibiotic.

Do not stop taking your antibiotic, even if you may feel better or do not have any more symptoms. Finish all of the antibiotic that your doctor has prescribed for you.

If you do not finish all of your antibiotic, you could make your infection worse or cause the antibiotic to become less effective the next time you need to take it.

A WORLDWIDE CONCERN

In the last 10 years, antibiotics have not always been used wisely. Bacteria are becoming stronger and now many of the different kinds of antibiotics are not able to kill them. Today this is one of the world's most important health problems.

When antibiotics do not work, you may take longer to get well or you may have to go to a hospital for treatment that is very expensive.

YOUR CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Children are prescribed antibiotics the most. This is because parents usually ask their doctor for it. If your doctor feels that your child does not need an antibiotic for a cold or the flu, do not worry. Your doctor knows the best way to treat your child's illness.

Today we are finding that many children have been getting infections caused by these stronger bacteria. Because of this doctors are not able to use the same antibiotics that they have used in the past. Doctors are now using new and more expensive antibiotics to treat these types of infections.